

Some Discoveries on the Tembeling

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Some Discoveries on the Tembeling.

By W. LINEHAN.

(with plates XXXVI—XLIII, one sketch map and one text-figure).

During a recent visit to the mukims bordering on the river Tembeling I came upon some very interesting traces of the pre-Malay inhabitants of Pahang which I describe here.

A small sketch map showing the scenes of the finds accompanies this paper. The discoveries were made chiefly at Jeram Kwi, Kua'a Nyong, Teluk Lubok Puai, and Bukit Jong.

In no case did time permit of a thorough investigation hence the fragmentary nature of my notes on the subject. The finds were in many cases consequent on the great floods of 1926—1927 which tore away huge masses of earth from the banks of the Tembeling and laid bare the objects here described.

My thanks are due to Mr. J. C. Shenton of the Geological Department, Federated Malay States, for identifying the iron slag found at Jeram Kwi and Kuala Nyong, specimens of the iron implements found at Teluk Lubok Puai and Bukit Jong, and the bronze objects discovered at the latter place.

Jeram Kwi

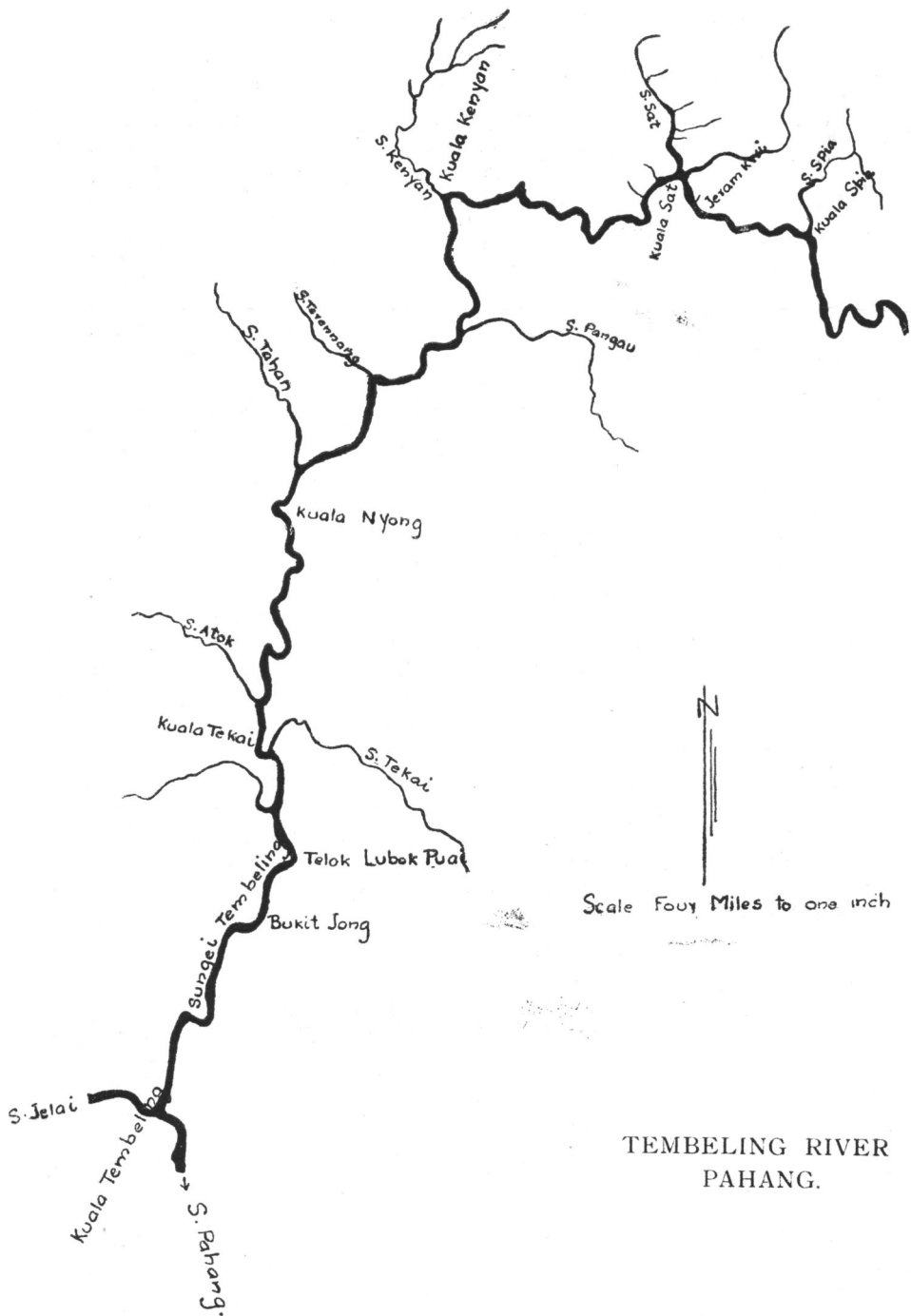
Jeram Kwi is situated on the Tembeling about 60 miles from its mouth and about two miles above Kuala Sat. The origin of the name is narrated in the Malay Annals. The Malays from Malacca had invaded Pahang about the middle of the 15th century. They defeated the Siamese Viceroy of that country, Maharajah Dewa Sura, captured his daughter and pursued him up the Pahang and the Tembeling rivers.

The Annals go on to describe his flight:—

“ Maharaja Dewa Sura fled in a boat and was poled (upstream). When he reached certain rapids he thought that the men of Ma'acca were not likely to follow him so far. He accordingly said to his boat-men ‘ Kwi, Kwi.’ which means ‘ Slowly, Slowly.’ Now to this day those rapids are called ‘ Jeram Kwi.’ But the Malacca folk followed so quickly that Maharaja Dewa Sura had not time to escape by boat. He jumped into the stream and ran ashore, and stayed for three days and three nights in the jungle without food or drink ”.

While my boats were being hauled over the rapids, having in mind the historical associations of the place, I searched for possible relics of the past. Embedded in the right bank in a line with the central point of the rapids about five feet below the top of the bank I found a portion of what seems to be a clay crucible (Plate xxxvi

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fig. 2) and small quantities of iron slag. A further search revealed the following objects which were found within a radius of about fifty yards from this spot: a clay mould of the breech part of a cannon (Plates xxxvi and xxxvii fig. 1), a portion of the mould of a gun of larger calibre (Plate xxxvii fig. 2), four more portions of gun-moulds (?) two of which are shown on Plate xxxvii (figs. 3 and 4), a part of another clay crucible of the same type as that shown in Plate xxxvi (Fig. 2), a part of a vessel of thick clay the capacity of which is small in comparison with its size, fluted out-side (Plate xxxvi fig. 3) possibly also a crucible, a solid clay oblong object which may have been a mould of some sort (Plate xxxvi fig. 4), a tubular object of clay with spiral markings on the outside hollowed out for portion of its length (Plate xxxvi fig. 5) possibly a mould for a powder tube, two smaller tubular objects of coarse gritty clay (now unfortunately lost) which appeared to have been subjected to intense heat, the base of an earthenware basin with simple decoration, a fragment of the rim of apparently the same vessel, the base of what appears to have been an earthen platter, a fragment of the rim of a large earthen pan, part of an earthen jar, part of an unfinished earthen mould (?), fragments of pottery with slip decoration of the type described in Mr. I. H. N. Evans' paper "On a Find of Stone Implements Associated with Pottery" published in the *Journal of the F.M.S. Museums* (xii, 1928, pp. 133—5). Other finds included four stone implements of axe-head shape two of which are composed of powdery stone. Quantities of iron slag were strewn about the place. On the "strand" of the river a short distance below the rapids were stones in large quantities covered with fire-burnt clay. These may have formed the floor of a primitive furnace.¹

The mould of the breech part of a cannon shown on Plates xxxvi and xxxvii (fig. 1) is about 19.9 cms. long, the diameter and thickness of the barrel-part being 7 cms. and 1.3 cms. respectively. It has a triangular flange surrounding the vent. It is apparently whole except for minor breakages in the flange. Cord markings are visible on its rear-end.

The date of the invention of cannon and their country of origin is uncertain. Some writers credit the Chinese or Arabs with the discovery. Cannon were known in Europe early in the 14th century. One of the earliest types of gun used in England was a muzzle

¹ A more unlikely conjecture is that such stones were the remains of the base or foundations of the wall of a fort. This would explain the reference in the Malay Annals to the firing of the foundations of a fort erected to repel an invasion of Pahang by the Siamese about 1500 A.D. The foundations and lower part of the walls were made of stones coated with clay which after construction, were fired from both sides so that the burnt clay formed a cement binding the stones together.

loader with a vent-channel at the breech end. In 1338 there existed breech-loading guns of both wrought iron and brass provided with one or more movable chambers to facilitate loading. The most primitive guns generally fired stone shot. Iron projectiles seem to have been first used in Europe in the 16th century.

The *cire perdue* method of casting guns seems to have been employed at Jeram Kwi. The gun was first modelled in clay rather smaller in its dimensions than the future gun. Over this a layer of wax was laid of the desired thickness and worked to the required form and finish. A mixture of pounded brick clay and ashes was then ground finely in water to the consistence of cream and successive coats of this mixture were then applied till a second envelope was formed all over the wax fitting closely into every line and depression of the modelling. Soft clay was then carefully laid on to strengthen the mould in considerable thickness till the whole appeared like a shapeless mass of clay round which fastenings were placed to hold it all together. The whole was then dried in the sun and placed in a hot furnace which baked the clay both of the core (or inside mould) and the outside mould and melted the wax which was allowed to run out from small holes made for the purpose. Thus a hollow was left corresponding to the thickness of the wax between the inner and outer moulds, the relative positions of which were preserved by small metal rods which had previously been driven through from the outer to the inner mould. The mould was now ready and the melted metal was poured in till the whole space between the core and the outer mould was full. After slowly cooling the outer mould was broken away from outside the gun and the inner core broken up and raked out through the bore of the gun. The projecting metal rods were cut away and the whole finished by rubbing down and polishing over any roughness or defective places. If this method of casting were followed here we must assume that the moulds shown on Plate xxxvi (fig. 1) and Plate xxxvii (figs. 1 and 2) were unused. If they had been used they would necessarily have been broken on completion of the cast. Guns cast in this way must have been extraordinarily weak and ineffective, and must have exercised more moral than material effect on the enemy. It is interesting to note that the people of Trengganu to the present day follow the *cire perdue* method of casting and produce toy cannon in this way.¹ It is not at all improbable that the craft of metal-working in Trengganu has been handed down by the same race whose traces are found at Jeram Kwi.

The finds described here indicate that in the past there was a settlement at or near Jeram Kwi where iron smelting and the manufacture of cannon was carried on. The acquaintance with the

¹ Vide the article on "Tembaga Puteh and Tembaga Merah" in the journal of the Malayan Agri-Horticultural Association for May, 1928.

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name of the place displayed by the writer of the Malay Annals would seem to show that Jeram Kwi was in the past of some importance. The association of the place with the "Siamese" as shown in the Annals, and the tradition still prevalent that Bukit Kepayang which is situated, I understand, about a mile away from Jeram Kwi was once a "Siamese" settlement would go to indicate that the people who smelted iron and made guns there were "Siamese", that is to say one of the races which inhabited what is now known as Siam. It is suggested that the dates between which this settlement flourished were the 14th century¹ and about the middle of the 15th century when the people from the north were expelled by the Malaccan Malays.

From a strategical point of view Jeram Kwi would have been an admirable place to establish a settlement. Enemy forces moving up or down the river could not pass the rapids unless they disembarked and could secure possession of the banks.

Near Jeram Kwi is a place (which I had not time to visit) where, according to tradition, the traces of the fishing net of the fabled Toh Ala Inang "the Head Woman"² are still to be seen on a rock. The story goes that after getting a haul of fish in her net she destroyed it so that nobody else could use it. This may be a garbled version of the story of the old woman who harboured Maharaja Dewa Sura near Jeram Kwi. I record the tradition as it is possible that something of archæological interest may be found at the spot.

Kuala Nyong.

Kuala Nyong is situated about 28 miles from the mouth of the Tembeling and a few miles from Kuala Tahan. It is the scene of the discoveries which form the subject of Mr. Evans' papers "On a Find of Stone Implements Associated with Pottery" and "Further notes on Stone Implements Associated with Pottery" published in Volume xii of the Journal of the F.M.S. Museums (pp. 133—5, 143—4). The discoveries were made in a broad passage furrowed by the flood of 1926—27 through a *tanjong* or promontory of the river.

Of the four stone implements found by me here two are of ordinary type. The other two are of a kind I have not seen before. That shown on Plate xxxviii (fig. 8) is a flint of a reddish-brown colour, highly polished, too thin perhaps to have been used as an axe-head. It was found in close proximity to iron oxide and may

¹ It is recorded that Pahang was under the rule of Palembang in the 14th century. The "Siamese" were the dominant people there in the 15th century.

² For the meaning of *inong* (variant *inang*?) vide Hurgronje's "The Achehnese" (English translation) Vol. I p. 265.

have been coloured thereby. The implement shown in Plate xxxix (figs. 1 and 3) is a hard brownish-grey stone. One of the fastenings binding the stone to its handle has left its impression all around. The notch at the haft end may have been used for the accommodation of a fastening to relieve the pressure on the handle when a blow was delivered. There is a small fracture at the central point of the free end of the stone possibly caused by usage. Otherwise the surface of the stone seems natural. Bronze and iron implements in their earlier stages sometimes tended to follow the older stone implements in shape. A comparison between this implement and the iron tool shown on the same plate (figs. 2 and 4) which was discovered at *Tambak Siam*, Pekan District, illustrates this point.

But the most interesting discovery at Kuala Nyong was that of large quantities of iron slag from smelting operations which were found by the side of one of the small pools with which the place was dotted. This spot was probably under water on the occasion of previous investigations there. As we had no digging tools with us and time did not permit, the extent of the layers of slag was not ascertained. In conjunction with the metal were found some blocks of iron ore, probably haematite, and some pieces of partially smelted ore. No bronze objects have been discovered at Kuala Nyong. As it is possible that the scene of the finds at Kuala Nyong may become the new bed of the river in the course of the next rainy season the prosecution of further investigations there is a matter of some urgency.

Teluk Lubok Puai.

The objects found at this place, which is situated about 13 miles up the Tembeling were discovered by Haji Wan Musa of Jong Berlaboh shortly after the big flood. Haji Wan Musa informed me that the stone and the iron specimens were got on the rocks on the left bank of the Tembeling, at Teluk Lubok Puai and the bronze bowl and "urn lid" in the waters of the river at Batu Pasir Garam a short distance below that place. I did not inspect the scene of the finds.

The iron tools found were eight in number two of which are shown on Plate xl (figs. 1 and 5). One (Plate xl fig. 1) is flat, thin and sharpened at one end. It is about 24.7 cms. long. Another (Plate xl fig. 5) has a length of about 37 cms. One end is hammered out to a sharp edge. At the other end is a socket. Judging by the smallness of the socket and the distribution of the weight of the implement it would seem as if the handle did not end with the socket but ran through it and the tool were worked by a two-handed grip one on each side of the socket. Two implements of the same type have been discovered at Klang, and at Sengat near Ipoh.¹

¹ Vide Evans "Slab Built Graves in Perak" *Journal of the F.M.S. Museums*, Vol. xii, 1928, pp. 111—119.

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Through the kindness of Che' Mahmud M.C.S., Assistant District Officer, Kuantan into whose possession they had come, I was enabled to add two other iron implements from the same hoard to my collection. One of these is shaped rather like a falchion, sharpened on the inner side of the curve and blunt on the outside. It is hafted and socket-less, and has a length of 17.9 cms. It is similar to an implement discovered by me at Bukit Jong, Plate xl fig. 2) and, (except for the absence of a socket) to two implements found in ancient graves at Sungkai and Sengat, Perak.² The other implement obtained from Che' Mahmud is a socketed tool 23 cms. long with flattened triangular shaped head and broad cutting edge.

I have seen an iron implement from this hoard which was presented to His Excellency Sir Hugh Clifford. I recollect that it was a tool resembling the triangular-headed tool which I have just described. Haji Wan Musa informs me that two similar implements, together with a tool resembling those figured as 3, 4 and 8 on Plate xl, from the same hoard are in the possession of His Highness the Sultan of Pahang.

The stone celts found at Teluk Lubok Puai are of the ordinary type. One is shown on Plate xxxviii (fig. 1) as being an unusually good specimen. It is a meteorite, 24 cms. in length and is worn thin from usage as a sharpening stone.

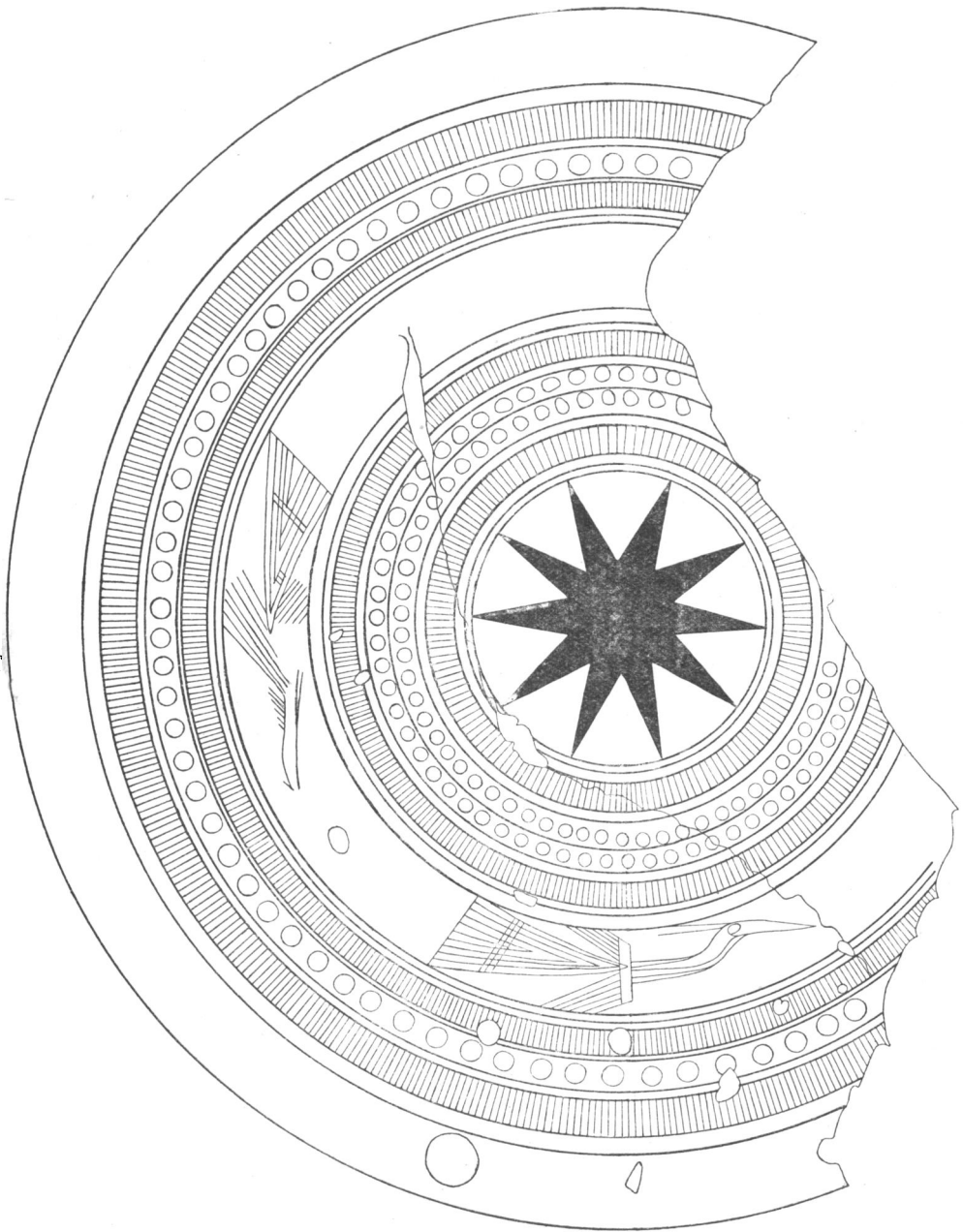
The most interesting relics discovered at Telok Lubok Puai are two moulds of stone for the casting of leaf-shaped bronze or iron spear heads (Plate xli). These are of the type known as open moulds which in Europe, have been found in association with Bronze Age settlements. They are 27 and 30 cms. in length. The shape in one (fig. 1 and 3) is deeper and more symmetrical than that in the other (fig. 2 and 4). One side of the former seems to have been used as a sharpening stone possibly for finishing off the weapon after casting. These moulds are, I think, the first of their kind found in Malaya.

Near the stone moulds was found an object resembling a finger-ring (Plate xlii, fig. 2). The black stone of which it is composed is similar to that of the bracelet discovered at Bukit Jong. It is not of uniform thickness. It may be (what it looks like) a finger-ring (though too small for an adult), or a talisman, or perhaps a primitive form of currency.

The bronze bowl reproduced on Plate xxxviii fig. 6 is of thin highly finished metal. It is without decoration except that faint ring markings are visible on its exterior. The diameter of the mouth of the bowl is 14 cms. Its base is missing.

Perhaps the most interesting of the finds on the Tembeling is the bronze "lid" (text figure 1) which came into my possession through the kind offices of Che' Mahmud. It was found in close

² *ibid.*



TEXT-FIGURE 1.
Bronze "urn lid" found near Teluk Lubok Puai.
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proximity to the bronze bowl which I have just described. It is a circular object 69 cms. in diameter, with a part missing. It is perforated in nine places possibly owing to defects in its casting. The face of the "lid" is decorated with representations of a ten-pointed sun (?), concentric circles, numerous small circles, linear ornamentation, and the figures of two crested long-beaked (?) long tailed birds with wings out-spread in flight, possibly meant to represent pea-cocks. The original decoration was obtained from a mould and stands out. On the outer part of the "lid" where a clear impress was not obtained, the design of the original ornamentation is copied in roughly incised work. The representation on the face may have some symbolical significance. At the back of the object are the remains of a rim of thin metal running around the edge. Between rim and edge is a rest to support the "lid" on the receptacle, which it was designed to cover. The back is plain. The boss is of thicker metal than the other parts which, except for the rim, are of uniform thickness. (Pl. xlii).

The elaborateness of the object, its size and composition go to indicate that it was not the cover of a vessel designed for domestic or other common purposes for which earthen-ware utensils were more suitable and more readily available. I suggest that it formed the lid of a bronze urn used as a receptacle for the body of a chief after his death and before cremation. The practice of thus disposing of the dead body of a prince or noble of high degree before it was burnt is still in force amongst the modern Siamese.¹

Near the "lid" and bowl just described was found a brownish-coloured stone implement (Plate xliii fig. 3) on the worn cutting-edge of which are faint traces of red (iron oxide?). Like the stone implements found at Kuala Nyong (which it somewhat resembles) it may have been a metal-worker's tool.

Bukit Jong.

Bukit Jong lies about a mile below Teluk Lubok Puai. The stone bracelet shown on Plate xxxviii (fig. 11) was found by a boy from the neighbouring village on the top of the steep rocky left bank of the Tembeling, half embedded in the soil, a few days before my visit. The bracelet is made of black stone with rounded exterior. In its inner circumference it has shallow grooves possibly caused in the process of manufacture. Its diameter on one side is about 5.5 cms. and on the other about 5.7 cms. The Malays describe it as a fairy-circlet (*gĕlang jin*) and credit its wearer with the gift of invulnerability. A fragment of apparently a somewhat similar type of ornament has been found at Nyik near Kuantan.²

Accompanied by the founder of the bracelet, I visited the spot where it was picked up. The impression made by it in the soil was

¹ Vide Graham's "Siam" 3rd edition Vol. I page 165 *et seq.*

² Vide Evans on "Stone built Graves in Perak" *l.c.s.*

still evident. Close by, I found small fragments of rough pottery, an iron implement (Plate xl fig. 7), a small fragment of the rim of a bronze vessel, the fragment of another bronze object decorated with wavy lines (Plate xxxvii fig. 7) possibly part of a plaque or of the flattened portion of a vessel.

In a runnel leading from the same spot down to the river I discovered six ancient iron implements (Plate xl fig. 2, 3, 4, 6, 8 and 12). The falcion-shaped object (fig. 2) is of a similar type to one of the implements found at Telok Lubok Puai which I have already described. The three chisel-like tools (figs. 3, 4, and 8) have rounded hafts and heads sharpened and hammered flat. The object (fig 6) is apparently a scraper. It may also have been used as a knife. Figure 7 is that of a knife. The small-socketed "pick-axe" (fig. 12), if straightened, would rather approximate, in appearance to that shown as fig. 5 on the same plate. Most of the implements described seem to have been miners' or metal-workers' tools.

The quoit-like object (shown on Plate xlii fig. 1) was also discovered at Bukit Jong. As the finder had died I was unable to ascertain in what circumstances it was obtained. It is of highly polished, light-greyish stone of which the grain is visible in parts. It is sharpened all around the edge. Both sides are rounded but the bevelling is more pronounced on one side. Its diameter is 14.4 cms., while the diameter of the inner circle is 6.7 cms. at one side and slightly less on the other. On the circumference of the inner circle are faint incised lines apparently caused in the process of manufacture. A similar object which has also come into my possession was picked up on the strand of the river at Pasir Kuang a short distance below Bukit Jong (Plate xxxviii fig. 10). This is of a greenish colour. The diameter of the object is 17.3 cms. and of its inner circle is 6.6 cms. Its outer edge is jagged while the inner edge is highly polished and has lost any traces, which may originally have been left in the process of the manufacture.

Quoit-like objects of stone of a similar type to those here described have been found in the wash-boxes at the Kemaboi Hydraulic Mine Negri Sembilan.¹

It is uncertain what these stone discs were used for. One theory is that they were religious symbols of some sort. Mr. Evans points out that the larger specimens are reminiscent of a certain type of club head from British Guinea. The jagged edges (caused by constant usage) of the specimen found at Pasir Kuang would go to support the view that it was a weapon.

Dato' Stia Jaya, late Malay Secretary to H. H. the Sultan of Pahang, informed me some years ago that aborigines were known to

¹ Evans "Ethnology and Archaeology of the Malay Peninsula" page 136 *et seq.*, pl. xxxvii.

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wear such objects, when, found, as a sort of buckle (or possibly a talisman) tied around their waist. The Hon'ble Mr. A. F. Worthington who has seen the discs considers that they may have formed the prototype of a certain common type of jade ornament.¹

The people then whose traces were found at Bukit Jong wore stone ornaments used bronze utensils comparatively highly finished, and iron implements crudely wrought. The indications are that they were early Iron Age settlers who had not yet discarded attractive kinds of stone for special uses, and who were skilled in the working of bronze but were novices in the working of iron.

Other objects found in the Tembeling are two solid stone roundels. One was picked up at Jeram Aur. It has a diameter on one side of 6.4 cms, and on the other, 6.9 cms. Its thickness varies from about 1.4 cms. to 1.6 cms. The side with the larger diameter is more roughly finished than the other. The second disc (Plate xxxviii fig. 9) has a diameter of 5.4 cms. on one side and 5.7 cms. on the other. It was found at Pasir Merting. Its maximum thickness is about 1 cm. The edges of both discs bear ring markings. A stone disc of a type similar to those here mentioned has been found at Kuala Nyong.⁴ It is possible that these objects were used as stoppers for receptacles of some sort.

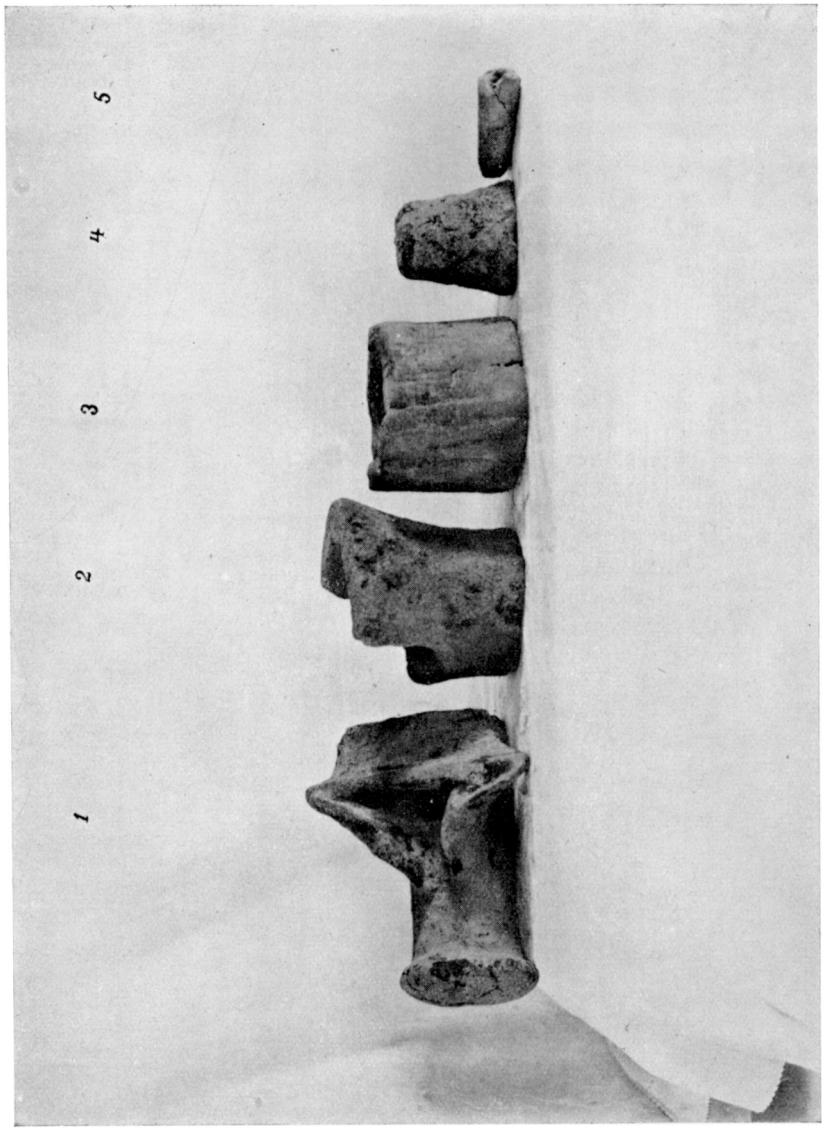
The high-way of inland communication between Pahang and the more northerly countries in the Peninsula has always been the Tembeling. The "Siamese" in Pahang on their defeat by the Malays about the middle of the 15th century retreated up that river.² The ruler of Ligor followed the same route³ after the repulse of his invading forces about the end of the 15th century. This fact and the relics found at Jeram Kwi, Kuala Nyong, Teluk Lubok Puai and Bukit Jong which I have here described lead to the conclusion that in the past the valley of the Tembeling was much more extensively inhabited than it is at the present day.⁴

¹ *c.f.* the custom prevalent amongst women of the Mushso tribe in Siam of wearing large silver discs which are regarded as heirlooms and held very precious (Grahams "Siam" 3rd edition Vol. I p. 141).

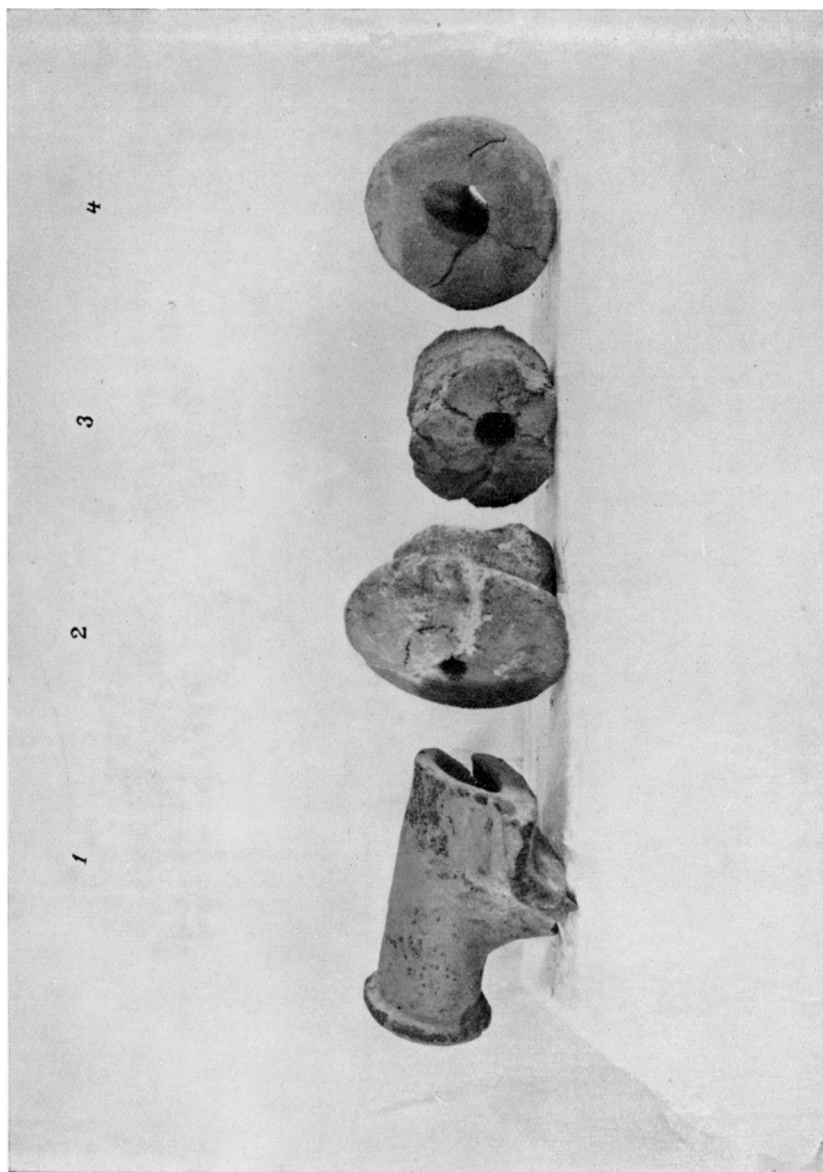
² Malay Annals.

³ Malay Annals.

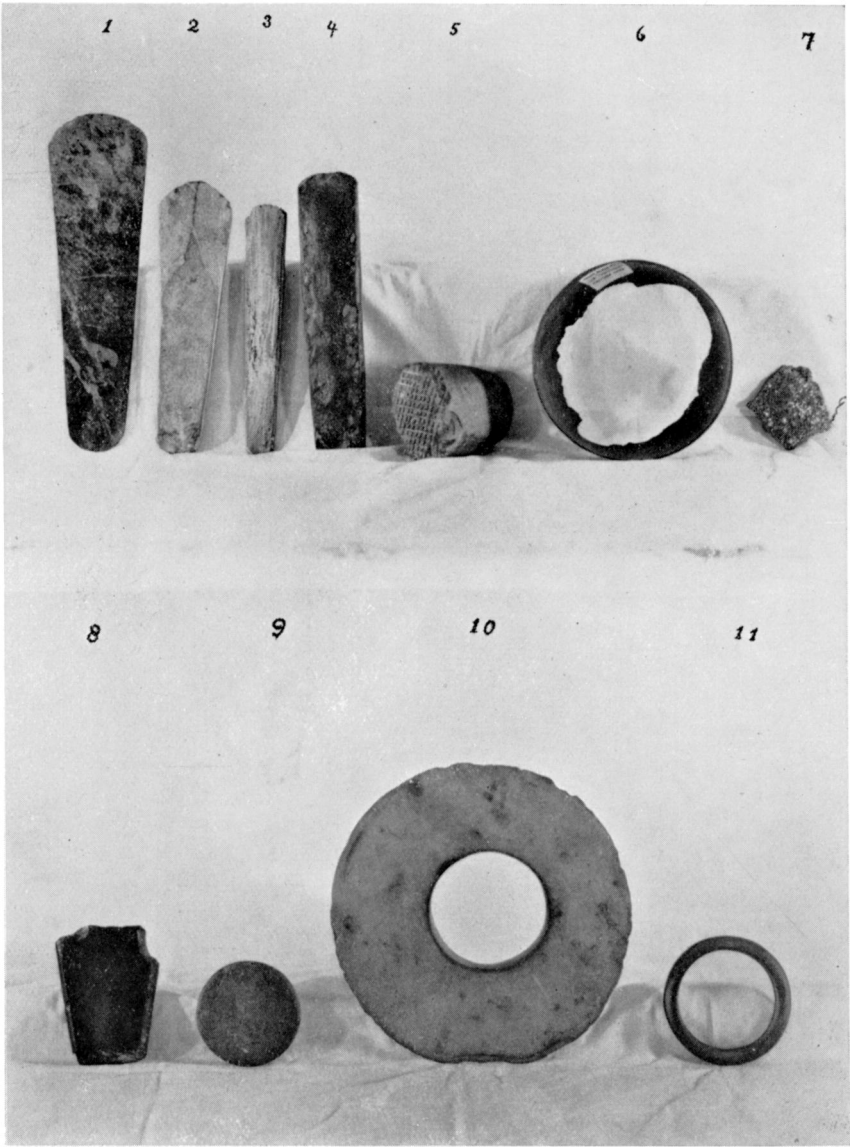
⁴ Evans "Further Notes on Stone Implements Associated with Pottery" *l.c.s.*



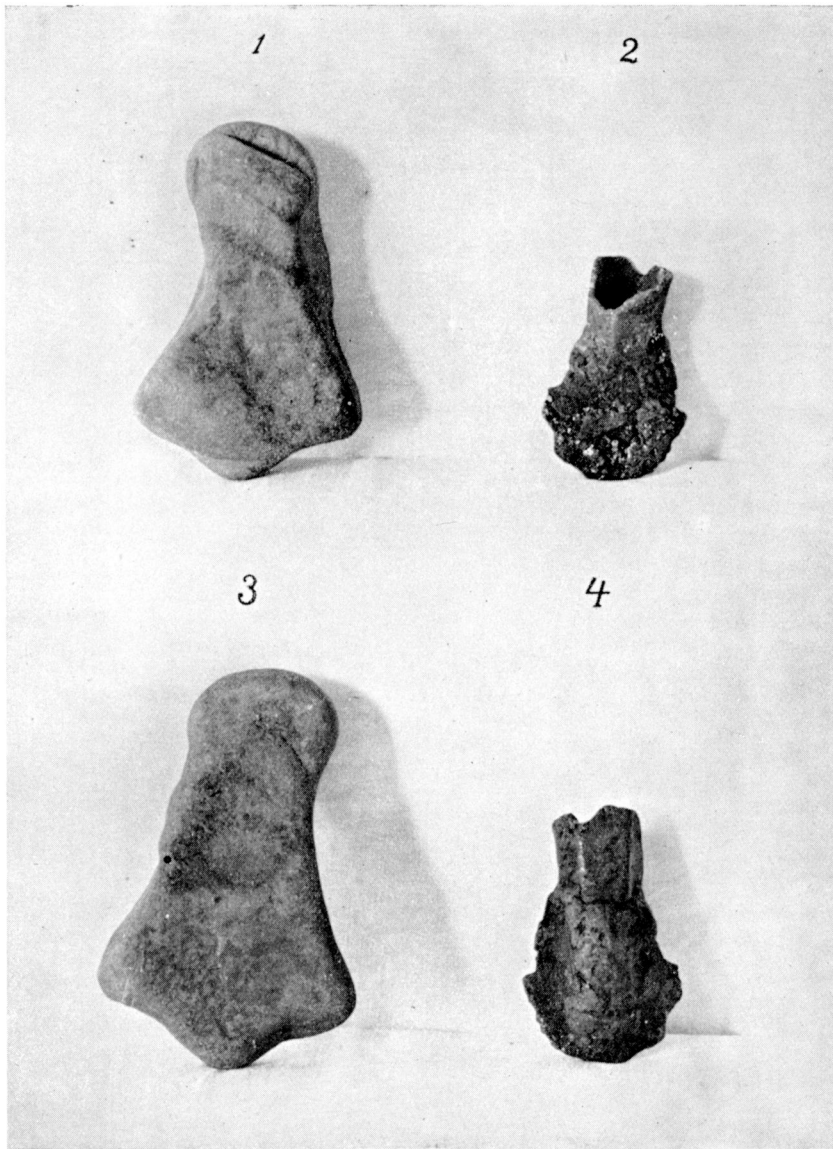
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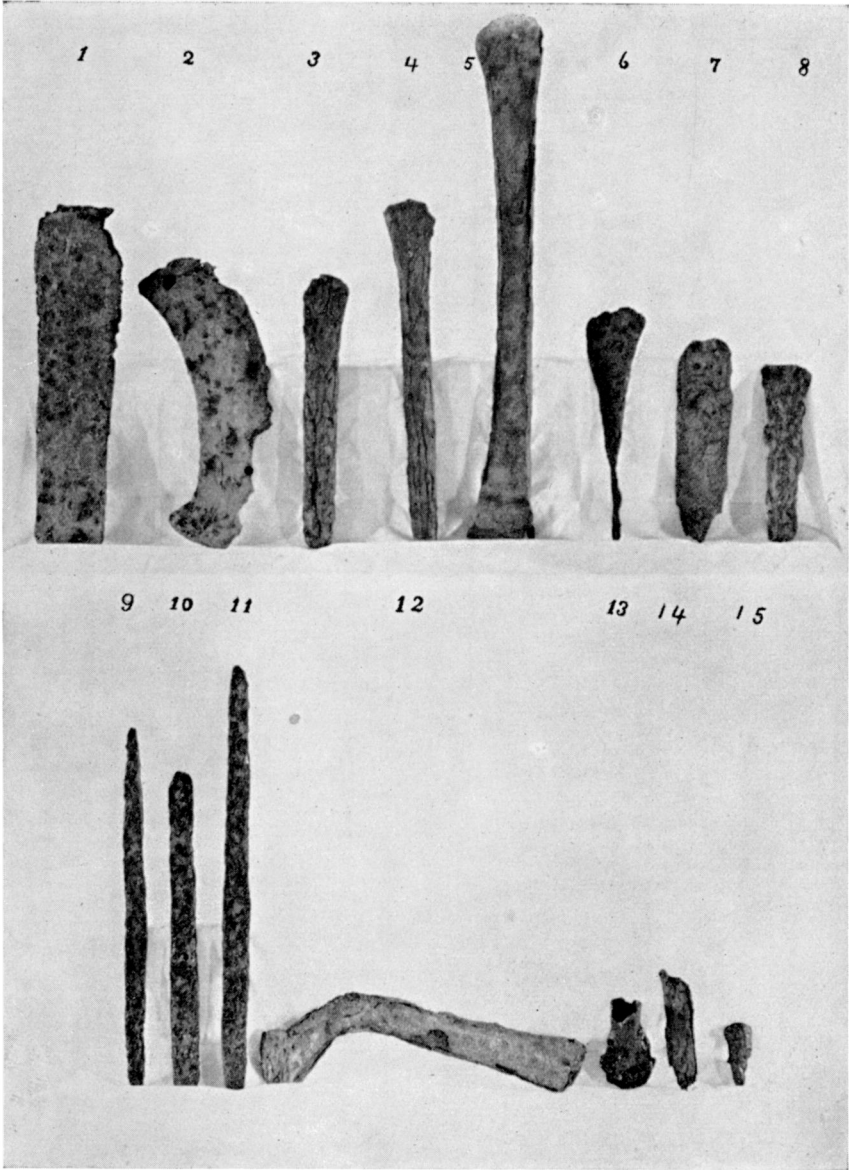
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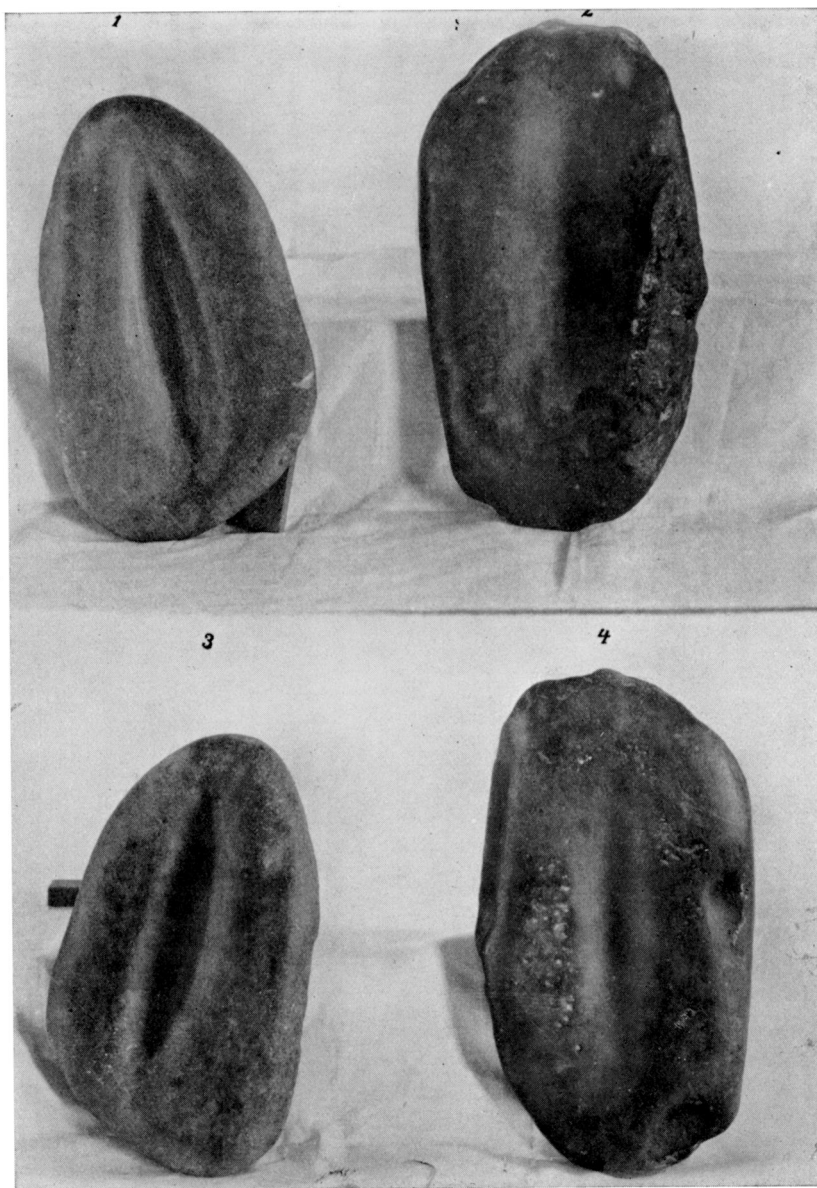
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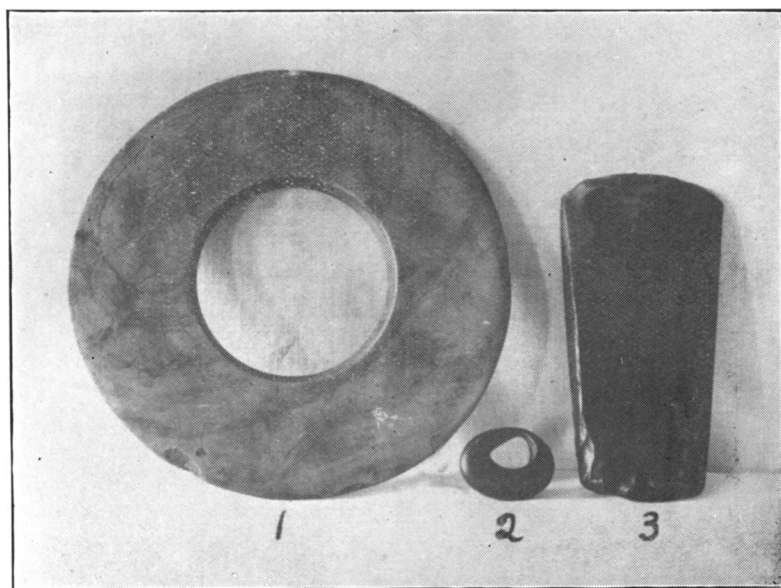
LINEHAN: Discoveries in Pahang.



LINEHAN: Discoveries on the Tembeling.



LINEHAN: Discoveries on the Tembeling.



LINEHAN: Discoveries on the Tembeling.

Explanation of Plates.

Plate XXXVI.

Clay objects found at Jeram Kwi. No. 1 is a mould of the breech part of a gun. Nos. 2 and 3 are probably crucibles. No. 4 is solid and may have been used as a mould of some sort. No. 5 may be part of the mould of a tube used for inserting powder into the vent of a gun. It has spiral markings in the outside and is partially hollow.

Plate XXXVII.

Clay gun-moulds found at Jeram Kwi. No. 1 gives another view of the mould shown as No. 1 on Plate xxxvi.

Plate XXXVIII.

Nos. 1, 2 and 3, stone celts from Kuala Nyong and Teluk Lubok Puai. No. 4 stone celt from Samas on the Tembeling. No. 5 stone bark-pounder from the Tanum near Kuala Merapoh. No. 6 upper part of bronze bowl from Bukit Jong. No. 7 part of bronze plaque or vessel from Bukit Jong. No. 8 polished flint implement of reddish-brown colour from Kuala Nyong. No. 9 stone disc from Pasir Merting on the Tembeling. No. 10 quoit-like object of greenish stone from Pasir Kuang near Bukit Jong. No. 11 stone bracelet from Bukit Jong.

Plate XXXIX.

Stone and iron implements. Nos. 1 and 3 implement of reddish grey stone from Kuala Nyong. Nos. 2 and 4 ancient iron tool with socket from remains of a brick building at *Tambak Siam*, Pekan District.

Plate XL.

Ancient iron implements. Nos. 1 and 5 were found at Teluk Lubok Puai. Nos. 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 12 at Bukit Jong. These are described in the text. No. 9 was dug up in padi fields at Ulu Ayer Hitam, Pekan. Its length is 20.3 cm. It may have been a hafted spear-head. Nos. 10 and 11 were found on the banks of the river Merchong, Pekan District. Their use is unknown. No. 13 is shown also on Plate xxxix. No. 14 is a knife found at *Tambak Siam*, Pekan district. No. 15 was found on the site of an ancient brick structure at Pekan. It seems to be part of a spike or nail.

Plate XLI.

Open stone moulds for casting bronze or iron leaf-shaped spear-heads. Both obverse and reverse sides are shown.

Plate XLII.

Bronze "urn-lid" found near Teluk Lubok Puai.

Plate XLIII.

Fig.1—QUIT-like object of light-greyish stone found at Bukit Jong, Sungei Tembeling.

Fig. 2—Stone finger-ring (?) found at Teluk Lubok Puai, Sungei Tembeling.

Fig. 3—Brownish-coloured stone implement picked up at Batu Pasi Garam near Teluk Lubok Puai, Sungei Tembeling.

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